

## Promising Practice: Bilingual Pre-Practical Nursing Program

### Full Employment Council

### 21st Century Healthcare Works

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To address local workforce needs, Full Employment Council and local partners collaborated to develop a bilingual training program for pre-practical nursing. The Preparados en Salud (PeS) program combines Certified Nurse Assistant training, academic and workforce preparation, and prerequisite classes designed to help students seeking admission to Metropolitan Community College's (MCC) practical nursing program. PeS serves participants in the 21st Century Healthcare Works initiative, a Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) program funded by the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance.

PeS is a partnership between the Full Employment Council, Metropolitan Community College, the Hispanic Economic Development Corporation (HEDC), Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), and the National Council of La Raza. In 2010, the Hispanic Economic Development Corporation was researching employment and training opportunities in the Kansas City area. HEDC approached Full Employment Council and MCC to plan for workforce partnerships specifically within the Hispanic community. At the same time, local hospitals were reporting serving increasingly larger Spanish-speaking populations, but having trouble finding enough bilingual staff who could communicate with individuals during direct care. After participating in a workforce development forum in the fall of 2010, these organizations decided to form a partnership to develop a bilingual training program resulting in employment in the healthcare industry.

FEC's role is to provide recruitment, assessment, screening, career counseling, program placement, and supportive services to PeS participants before training, and employment placement and retention services after training. JVS provides on-site case management services to all PeS students, including intake, assessment, appropriate referrals for services needed outside of the scope of JVS services, and follow-up meetings with each student as necessary, but at least monthly to assess progress and or barriers. JVS reevaluates case management plans as necessary for successful outcomes.

The National Council of La Raza provides technical assistance and information about the Carreras en Salud program in Chicago, which serves as the model for the PeS program. Truman Medical Center and Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics provided input about employer needs. Other employer partners are Cabot Health Center and Samuel Rodgers Health Center.

The program's training components include:

1. Certified Nurse Assistant
2. Patient Care Technician
3. Mental Health First Aid
4. Level One Medication Aide
5. American Heart Association CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) for Healthcare Providers

6. Nursing Seminar (employability skills, bilingual medical terminology, professionalism)
7. Math for Nursing (supplemental instruction for Cell Biology class)
8. Nursing Prerequisites
  - a. BIOL100 – Cell Biology
  - b. BIOL109 – Anatomy and Physiology

The first class graduated in September 2012. Over the long term, the PeS partnership is designed to: (1) create a career path in the healthcare field that is based on best practices; (2) provide new and stable access for low-skill Hispanic adults in community college certificate and degree programs in healthcare; (3) place certificate holders and graduates in corresponding career path employment and assist with their advancement in their careers; and (4) develop a best-practice model that will be recognized within the workforce development field at the national level. This initiative will help meet the demand for bilingual healthcare workers as well as serve the region's burgeoning Hispanic population.

## **Promising Practice: Just-In-Time Training Full Employment Council**

The Full Employment Council (FEC) is a business-led, private nonprofit organization that provides skills training and employment services to the unemployed and underemployed residents of the Greater Kansas City area. Through the 21st Century Healthcare Works HPOG program, FEC provides healthcare training to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and low-income individuals. The program is focused on using real-time information from local employers, in concert with labor market information, to help participants make informed choices about their chosen training program.

FEC calls its training strategy the Just-In-Time approach, referring to how the training is customized to meet an employer's immediate workforce need. The approach recognizes that due to expansion or technology changes, employers can have sudden, immediate job openings for workers with the right skills and preparation. FEC guides participants into appropriate workplace skills and occupational training programs, so graduates are positioned just in time to fill these openings. Just-In-Time training is also customized to meet the needs of the job seeker in several ways.

FEC uses labor market information and real-time workforce intelligence from local employers to determine the most appropriate training course to enroll clients in or develop. The program uses a training menu that covers a wide variety of healthcare occupations by utilizing all local community colleges, vocational schools, and 4-year institutions. The training menu uses an industry panel to determine the training course most likely to meet the real time job openings. Programs on the menu have lengths ranging from 6 weeks to 24 months and lead to a variety of credentials. The strategy is designed to be as market sensitive as possible to ensure high rates of successful job placements.

The Just-In-Time approach is also designed to meet the needs of students. Counselors work with students to create plans that balance the student's goals with the realities of the job market. FEC's approach employs stackable credentials systems when appropriate. For example, when employer input showed a need for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) with specializations in mental health and dementia care, the program developed CNA Plus programs, which include training for the CNA certificate, Medication Aide Level I, CPR and Basic Life Support (BLS), and Insulin Injection. The CNA Plus program also contains career readiness modules, including workplace readiness, computer skills, resume preparation, interviewing preparation, and financial literacy.

FEC's approach recognizes that each participant's situation is unique. FEC only recommends that students seek additional credentials when it is appropriate for the individual. Some students can be intimidated by the length of certain programs. Many participants want to be employed immediately. For some occupations, students can be discouraged when they learn that entry-level wages are lower than expected. The program addresses these challenges by helping participants find some form of employment immediately and providing support with

mentors. Career ladders are used to demonstrate the value of taking the first step in a healthcare career and to reinforce the likelihood of long-term wage gains. The program uses certificates or other recognition to mark steps and milestones in students' lives and congratulate participants on their successes.

Program staff continue to work with students during the placement transition. FEC provides biweekly monitoring onsite at the employer's location to mitigate any issues that may arise during the employment training period. Counselors conduct monthly follow up to assess the participant's need for supportive services during the first few weeks of employment. Once the participant has completed training, follow up is provided at 30-, 60-, 90-, and 120-day intervals to monitor retention.

FEC has found that this market-sensitive, customized training approach results in at least a 30 percent success differential, when compared with the completion rates for training courses that do not utilize workforce intelligence. FEC will continue using the Just-In-Time training approach, combined with a diverse training menu through varied educational institutions. Just-In-Time's diverse training intensity maximizes job placement success while meeting the workforce needs of local employers.